"Everyone has the right to an education."

# GREEN LIGHT TO GREEN STREET: CTF to Host National Environmental Education Program

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is pleased to be one of the host organizations for the Green Street program. Green Street is an innovative, Web-based "meeting place" or destination for teachers and students interested in bringing exemplary environmental education into schools right across Canada. Take a virtual stroll down Green Street (www.green-street.ca) to find a broad array of pre-screened, curriculum-linked environmental education programs offered to Grades 1 through 12.

The Green Street program began in 2001 and the range of programs offered has increased over time. Some programs focus specifically on the natural environment, while others are more oriented to learning about sustainability integrating environmental, economic and social concerns. As teachers you will find programs that:

- are relevant to students' concerns
- are curriculum-linked
- encourage a sense of personal responsibility for the environment
- foster a commitment to sustainable living, and
- promote an enduring dedication to environmental stewardship.

CTF is excited by this new involvement and we look forward to working closely with our Québec counterpart, la Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ), to offer teachers French and English programs across the country.

Green Street is funded by the J. W. McConnell Family Foundation. The Foundation is a private family foundation that funds initiatives of national significance which address challenges for Canadian society by engaging people, by building resilient communities, and by developing a strong knowledge base for the work that it supports.

Every spring the Canadian Teachers' Federation and Oxfam Canada issue *The Global Teacher*, which offers information and activities that facilitate classroom discussions and action to promote an individual sense of responsibility in an ever-increasing globalized world. This special September issue is an add-on to the regular *The Global Teacher* to introduce an Environmental Education Web-based portal offering programs to elementary and secondary school teachers.

**For additional information:**

www.green-street.ca www.marueverte.ca www.ctf-fce.ca

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## Did You Know?

**THE NEXT TIME you mop up a spill with a sponge, think of a wetland. And then, think of your tap water. Wetlands act as huge ecological sponges by soaking up pollutants and filtering water before it reaches your tap. They also store water for later use. The problem is North America is running out of these sponges.**

**THAT when things get too hot, the trees at the southern edge of the boreal forest die while trees at the northern edge aren't able to make new seedlings fast enough to replace them.**

**THAT one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to Ensure Environmental Sustainability to secure the survival of future generations. We can't maintain a healthy society or economy without taking care of our environment, and protecting that environment contributes to reaching all the other MDGs. Today, human activities are causing losses in biodiversity at a rate 50 to 100 times faster than would otherwise be expected.**

## Visit the Green Street Web site at www.green-street.ca to access programs bearing the Seal of Approval:

**EcoKids Clubs, offered by Earth Day Canada** – Be one of the 2,127 active **EcoKids** clubs across Canada. **EcoKids** puts fun, positive, "ready-to-use" environmental materials in your hands so you can work with students. Young people will learn about issues that affect their lives right now and get instructions for projects that tackle those issues head-on.

**Endangered Species Teaching Kit, offered by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society** – Enliven your lessons or arm yourself with some great activities, information and resources to teach social studies and science classes. Another program offered by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society is the **SOS: Save our Species!** In this fun and educational program (indoors or out), students (and teachers) will learn about the plight of Canada's species at risk. From the warm and furry, to the cold and slimy, students will get up close and personal with a few of Alberta's endangered species.

**Operation Water Spirit, offered by the Safe Drinking Water Foundation** – OWS offers a collection of thematic units and lesson plans which will reinforce aboriginal culture and perspectives regarding water for aboriginal students while at the same time provide an aboriginal perspective to non-aboriginal students about water issues, along with other similar programs.

**Conservation Corps Newfoundland & Labrador** – Through an interactive presentation and discussion, students can be provided with an overview of the **science of climate change**, predictions of local impacts, and global issues. Conservation Corps of Newfoundland and Labrador will show how links are made between individual action and global effects and students will be encouraged to take action to decrease their environmental impacts.

**Re-energy.ca, offered by The Pembina Institute** – Explore wind energy, water energy, solar energy, biomass energy and more. Build working models from easy-to-follow construction plans, including a wind turbine, biogas generator, solar car and more. **Re-energy.ca** provides background information, exciting hands-on learning activities, lesson plans, resources and links to renewable energy and sustainable energy information. Build the models and then teach others about the current uses of renewable energy and their importance in reducing our environmental impact.

**Adopt-A-Site program, offered by the Citizen's Environmental Watch** – This program encourages students and teachers to become 'citizen scientists' and take an active role in understanding and protecting their local environment. Students work with staff and volunteers to monitor air or surface water quality in their community, and they subsequently learn to take action and communicate their results.

**Changing Gears program, offered by the Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)** – Students learn about the relationship between personal transportation behaviour and climate change, sustainable consumption and active citizenship. Let your high school students find out how they can reduce their overall greenhouse gas emissions by adopting their own sustainable transportation behaviours.

**The Acadian and Boreal Forest program, offered by Sierra Club of Canada (Atlantic Chapter)** – Through a two-part in-class hands-on program, students gain a deeper understanding of this special ecosystem and the ways in which humans interact with the environment. Perhaps you'd like to explore **Atlantic Canada's Coasts and Ocean Program**, which introduces the diversity of species that live along our coasts and addresses the issues of our impact on this particular ecosystem.

**TREE Team Programs, offered by Sierra Club of Canada (BC Chapter)** – Give your students a deeper understanding of the special – and endangered – Canadian Temperate Rainforest ecosystems. Through participation in hands-on, interactive presentations, students will increase their ecological knowledge, acquire new stewardship skills and learn all about their role in the Temperate Rainforest. Visit the Green Street Web site to find out about other Sierra Club of Canada (BC Chapter) programs.

Use Environment Canada's free online educational resources to incorporate the environment into your classroom. We have teaching resources on fresh water, the Great Lakes, pollution prevention, meteorological observations, and more!
Visit us at www.ec.gc.ca/envact_e.html and click on Teachers' Resources.
Canada

**Wetland Centres of Excellence programs, offered by Ducks Unlimited** – Through in-class resource kits and learning materials on wetlands in Canada, or through field trips to local wetlands, Ducks Unlimited engages teachers and students in environmental learning through hands-on approaches and action-oriented wetland conservation initiatives.

**Quagmire, offered by Clean Nova Scotia** – This role-playing game simulates a real situation: whether or not to destroy a salt marsh to build a highway, or protect the marsh from development. Participating in a debate, students take on the roles of various stakeholders to discuss the fate of a saltwater marsh located in the Maritimes. A highly interactive game that stimulates students' participation and critical-thinking.

**The Yellow Fish Road™ program, offered by Trout Unlimited Canada** – A hands-on environmental project for youth to help decrease water pollution in their community. This reminds people that everything entering the storm drain system ends up in the local water body.

**Learning Grounds Program, offered by Evergreen** – This program supports schools across Canada by helping students and teachers transform their barren school grounds into natural outdoor classrooms. You will learn how to re-design your school ground and within a year, with lots of volunteer help, it will be looking a lot greener.

**The Otesha Project & Green Kids** – Perhaps you prefer live theatre? The **Otesha Project**'s theatre troupe will demonstrate the global impacts of our everyday actions, whether it's through the clothes, coffee and chocolate we buy, or the way we transport ourselves; secondary level students will love it. Or maybe you prefer **Green Kids** which offers live theatre performances to elementary students on topics such as climate change, global warming and sustainable development. Both performances culminate in classroom-based workshops around sustainability issues and individual responsibility.

## What is Sustainable Development and How Does Green Street Fit In?

In December 2002, a resolution was adopted by the United Nations to highlight the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). Education for Sustainable Development is learning to:

- respect, value and preserve the achievements of the past;
- appreciate the wonders and the peoples of the Earth;
- live in a world where all people have sufficient food for a healthy and productive life;
- assess, care for and restore the state of our Planet;
- create and enjoy a better, safer, more just world;
- be caring citizens who exercise their rights and responsibilities locally, nationally and globally.

There can be no long-term economic or social development on a depleted planet. Education to develop widespread understanding of the interdependence and fragility of planetary life support systems and the natural resource base upon which human well-being depends lies at the core of Education for Sustainable Development.

So what are you waiting for? Take part in the Decade for Sustainable Development and promote the UN Millennium Development Goal on Environmental Sustainability – become a Green Street teacher. You'll know you're making a difference.

## TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Each October 5, teachers' organizations worldwide mobilize to ensure that the needs of future generations are taken into consideration in this increasingly complex, multicultural and technological world. UNESCO inaugurated October 5 as World Teachers' Day in 1994. Education International (EI) strongly believes that this Teachers' Day should be internationally recognized and celebrated around the world since it commemorates the 40th anniversary of the UNESCO/ILO recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.

World Teachers' Day is a significant symbol of the awareness, understanding and appreciation displayed for the vital contribution that teachers make to education and development. This year's theme "Teachers Make a Difference" resonates not only where resources are plentiful, but in disadvantaged areas around the world.

Some of your teacher unions held fundraising activities either for charity or to help out those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Don't forget to visit the CTF Web site at www.ctf-fce.ca, or your teacher union's Web site to find out what's happening in your community on OCTOBER 5.

## GLOBAL ACTION WEEK

The theme of Global Action Week 2006 was "Every Child Needs a Teacher". To highlight the event, CTF was involved in many ways:

- We encouraged Canadian teachers to participate in activities to maintain the momentum of bringing quality education to the over 100 million children around the world who are not in school.
- We updated lesson plans and background materials from the 2005 "Send my Friend to School" campaign.
- We promoted new activities created by the Canadian Global Campaign for Education Alliance.
- We hosted our third annual Breakfast with MPs on Parliament Hill where 130 MPs, Senators and NGO representatives celebrated Global Action Week. Special guest, Education International representative Colin Greene, who is also the former President of the Caribbean Union of Teachers, spoke of the "brain-drain" that is affecting many developing countries that are losing their most qualified teachers to wealthier countries like Canada and the U.K.

In addition, the 2nd annual forum hosted by the Canadian Global Campaign for Education Alliance brought together over 100 representatives of Canadian NGOs, universities, unions and CIDA to revisit Canada's role and support for the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All targets. The venue was decorated with "cut-out friends" made by students in over 80 schools across the country sending out a clear message in support of Global Action Week and quality public education for all.

Visit the CTF Web site to stay informed about Global Action Week 2007, and to access classroom lessons and other resources that inform and engage students in the promotion of the MDGs and the EFA targets. You'll find the lessons are applicable to your classroom work all year round.

**www.campaignforeducation.ca**
**www.ctf-fce.ca**